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President: Mr. Han Seung-soo ..... (Republic of Korea)

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Agenda item 166 (*continued*)

Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Report of the Secretary-General (A/56/160 and Corr.1 and Add.1)

Mr. Koonjul (Mauritius): We are thankful to the Mayor of the city of New York, Mr Giuliani, for his inspiring statement on Monday morning. We take this opportunity to reiterate to him and to the people of New York our deepest sympathy following the tragedy of 11 September. We commend the people of the United States for the courage and resilience they have demonstrated and continue to demonstrate following the terrorist attacks.

The terrorist acts carried out on that fateful day in New York and Washington, D.C., remind us of the vulnerability of all countries, regardless of their state of preparedness. No country is immune from this kind of attack. It is a reminder that terrorists can, at the most unexpected moment, hit at the very heart of a free and peaceful society, causing tremendous human and material damage.

In the modern world of freedom, democracy and tolerance, it is simply unimaginable that some people choose to have recourse to such evil methods to express any form of anger and frustration, if there is any at all. In fact, there is no justification whatsoever for terrorism and no concession can be made to those who commit terrorist acts. Terrorism is simply evil and inhuman. It flouts the principles and objectives of the United Nations Charter. As such, it is an ever-present threat to international peace and security. This is why it is important for the international community and all people who believe in freedom, justice, peace, tolerance and democratic values to take a determined resolve to combat and eradicate this scourge.

With the numerous international conventions on terrorism, one would have hoped that we had adequate measures at our disposal to deal with terrorism. Unfortunately, this is not the case. It goes on to prove that either the instruments are not comprehensive enough or that, more importantly, we have failed in implementing them fully and effectively.

Last Friday, the Security Council took a bold and historical step by adopting the comprehensive and far-reaching resolution 1373 (2001) to deal with all aspects of terrorism in a global and holistic approach. The resolution, inter alia, calls upon Member States to become parties to the relevant international conventions relating to terrorism, including the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism of 9 December 1999. We urge all Member States to take immediate action to give effect to the provisions of the resolution.

All States must make a firm commitment to refrain from providing any form of support, active or passive — including political, moral or diplomatic support — to any terror group, irrespective of the ideologies and convictions it represents. This is all the

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more important in order to prevent terrorists from using the territory of one Member State to perpetrate acts of terror in the territory of another State.

Terrorists have no human or moral values, no respect for human rights and, in fact, no religion. The only religion they profess is to terrorize, maim and inflict maximum human suffering and material damage. It is therefore important not to confuse terrorism with any ethnic group or religion. The fight against terrorism is a fight by all nations, and should be undertaken in the framework of international solidarity and cooperation. It must be as comprehensive and as broad-based as possible, in terms of both action and support, if it is to be viable and successful. It must also be carried out in accordance with international law so as to deny terrorists sympathy from any quarter.

It is time for each of us to take action at the national level and for all of us, collectively, to take action at the international level, to pin down all terrorists and prevent them from planning and carrying out their shameful and heinous acts. In this regard, it is essential for all States to be able to fully implement the existing conventions on international terrorism. Likewise, it is important that procedures for international search and arrest be harmonized in order to bring the perpetrators of terrorist attacks to justice. It will also be very important for all States to cooperate at the international and the regional level to exchange information and intelligence on the activities of suspected groups.

It is important, however, to realize that many of us may not have the necessary expertise to frame appropriate legislation incorporating the provisions of international conventions into our own domestic laws. We call on the Secretary-General and those countries which have such expertise to provide the necessary technical assistance to countries in need.

We are fully aware of the close and complex link between terrorism, organized crime, drug-trafficking, the illegal exploitation of natural resources and the illegal trafficking and easy availability of small arms and light weapons. At the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects, held last July, many States rightly pressed for the inclusion in the Programme of Action of measures that would stop States from selling small arms and light weapons to non-State actors. Despite our efforts and determination, small arms and light weapons continue to get into the hands of terrorist groups, rebels and other unlawful elements. Coming from the African continent, we daily witness the immense havoc caused by such weapons. The recent tragedy has once more demonstrated that all nations should act in a decisive and coherent manner to stop the sale of small arms and light weapons to non-State actors. We cannot possibly achieve success in fighting terrorism if we do not take comprehensive steps to prevent all kinds of weapons, including biological, chemical and other weapons of mass destruction, from falling into the hands of terrorist groups.

We are grateful to the delegation of India for presenting the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism. We are equally appreciative of the draft convention to combat nuclear terrorism, submitted by the Russian Federation. We support the proposals contained therein and hope that all Members will approach both drafts in a constructive and productive manner with a view to their early adoption.

My country has always been supportive of all international initiatives designed to combat international terrorism. We were among the first few countries to sign the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime last year. We recently enacted the Economic Crime and Anti-Money-Laundering Act, which allows for the screening and constant monitoring of all operations in our offshore sector. We have ratified a number of important conventions dealing with international terrorism, and we are in the process of ratifying the remaining ones.

We once again pledge our full commitment to work together with the international community to eradicate forever terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and make this world a safer place for future generations.

Mr. Fonseca (Brazil): I should like to reiterate our profound sympathy for and solidarity with all those who have suffered as a result of the tragic loss of life caused by the grievous terrorist attacks of 11 September. Those despicable acts were viewed with outrage in Brazil. Our thoughts go out to the victims and their families.

The attacks on the United States sought to sow fear and paralysis. They failed to do so. The sober but determined response of the American people has inspired respect and solidarity and helped forge a

global sentiment that the time has come to deal decisively with terrorism.

The international community is meeting here to reaffirm our categorical condemnation of terrorism and lay out a comprehensive strategy to combat terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. There can be no justification whatsoever for terrorist acts. They are cowardly and barbaric acts that cannot be admitted under any pretext, whether political, religious or ideological. The perpetrators of terrorist attacks must be brought to justice, along with those that provide them with support and harbour them.

The Brazilian position on this issue is clear and unequivocal. The federal Constitution of Brazil establishes the repudiation of terrorism and racism as being among the principles governing our international relations. It also places terrorism among those heinous crimes whose perpetrators cannot benefit from the possibiiity of bail, grace or amnesty.

As stated by the Brazilian Minister of External Relations, Ambassador Celso Lafer, the terrorist attack on the United States on 11 September represented a direct threat to all civilized nations and to our democratic values.

Brazil endorsed the prompt action taken by the General Assembly and by the Security Council in condemnation of the attacks and reaffirmed our determination to combat terrorist actions with all means at our disposal, as such attacks represent a threat to international peace and security. We welcome the adoption of Security Council resolution 1368 (2001), establishing the foundations for concerted international action, and also the adoption last week of resolution 1373 (2001), encompassing a set of measures under Chapter VII of the Charter to enhance international cooperation in a vast array of areas, including measures aimed at rooting out the far-flung networks of support and financing used by terrorists.

We must spare no effort to ensure the full implementation of those resolutions, as well as to take any additional measures required by the General Assembly and the Security Council. Brazil will promptly take all necessary measures to comply fully with those provisions.

We must also reinforce our cooperative efforts at the regional level in the fight against terrorism. In the face of the aggression against the United States, Brazil supported the immediate convening of a ministerial meeting of the Organization of American States. Specific measures were then adopted to strengthen hemispheric cooperation in bringing perpetrators of terrorist acts to justice.

Additionally, Brazil took the initiative of invoking the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance. In recognition of the fact that the terrorist attacks suffered by the United States represent an attack on all American States, the mechanisms for mutual assistance were called into force. It was also decided, as a matter of urgency, that a draft inter-American convention against terrorism be submitted to the next General Assembly of the Organization of the American States.

This commitment to strengthening our collective security system in the face of terrorist threats builds on anti-terrorist measures adopted over the years at the regional and national levels. The Declaration and Plan of Action of Lima to Prevent, Combat and Eliminate Terrorism of 1996, as well as the Mar del Plata Commitment of 1998, laid the foundation for enhancing cooperation among the member states of the Organization of American States. At the subregional level, Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay have worked together effectively to integrate cross-border counter-terrorist police and intelligence activities.

Within the wider framework of measures adopted over the years by the United Nations, more specifically through General Assembly resolutions 49/60 and 51/210, we have created a network of interlocking conventions on judicial cooperation to ensure that the perpetrators of such crimes are held responsible. Brazil is taking measures to ensure that it is party to every one of these conventions.

Brazil welcomed the adoption of the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism. It provides a novel and much needed approach in addressing the intricate financial schemes that support terrorist activities. The Convention also paves the way for concerted preventive action between law enforcement and financial authorities around the world. We also urge all delegations to decisively move ahead in the negotiation of a comprehensive convention against terrorism.

These initiatives give a clear picture of the significant ground already covered by the United Nations in the struggle against terrorism. Yet this is

still not enough. We must guarantee that such atrocities never happen again. And for that purpose, as the Secretary-General stressed yesterday, it is urgent that the United Nations develop a long-term strategy, in which every Member State will have a part to play.

This strategy must encompass actions on all fronts, from immediate repression to long-term prevention, including a comprehensive legal framework, as called for in General Assembly resolution 49/60. It must also rely heavily on the role of the Security Council in conflict resolution, as the sole international body entitled to authorize coercive actions.

The fight against terrorism will necessarily be a difficult, drawn-out battle that goes beyond the repression and prosecution of perpetrators. Repressive actions to crack down on terrorist cells are certainly necessary. In many instances, they are the only effective means immediately available to restore security and remove the imminent threat of terrorist strikes.

But the tragic events of 11 September highlight how essential preventive measures are in dealing with terrorist threats. Cooperative efforts must necessarily involve the sharing of information among intelligence agencies, strict border controls on suspected transactions, the dismantling of the financial network that supports terrorist activities, and enhanced security in transportation systems. The great strides in communications and transportation technology ushered in by globalization have made terrorist groups even more elusive, including in their links to other contemporary scourges, such as drug trafficking and the illicit trade in arms.

We must also find the cooperative ways to cope with the dramatic effects terrorist acts have on the economies of all countries, big or small, as we have witnessed in the past few weeks.

Terrorism will certainly fail and reason will undoubtedly prevail if we ensure that the foundations of international stability are based on tolerance, justice and the pursuit of prosperity and peace for all. As President Fernando Henrique Cardoso recently put it, we must ensure that globalization does not become a synonym for extreme inequalities, but rather a means to ensure greater participation for all.

Ultimately, security lies in building a better, more equitable world around us. A world in which we make full and effective use of the Charter instruments for conflict resolution and conflict prevention.

We fully agree with Secretary-General Kofi Annan that the United Nations is uniquely placed to face these challenges. It provides the forum for building a global coalition that can legitimately develop a long-term response to terrorism and its causes.

This debate offers an opportunity for the international community to demonstrate its resolve to defeat terrorism. It should draw on the vast experience and know-how of the several relevant United Nations organs and specialized agencies, as well as regional and other organizations directly involved at all levels.

The international community should come together at this time to solemnly undertake certain fundamental steps that would signal our resolve to deal decisively with the menace of terrorism. These might include the following: first, ensuring the universal adoption and full implementation of the existing counter-terrorism conventions; secondly, redoubling efforts to conclude negotiations on the draft comprehensive terrorism convention; thirdly, requesting the Secretary-General to prepare a report recommending measures to enhance the role of the United Nations, international agencies and regional organizations in combating terrorism; fourthly, adhering strictly to measures of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction and, particularly, implementing fully those measures contained in the international conventions on chemical and biological weapons; fifthly, considering additional measures to enhance cooperation in such areas as border controls, financial institutions, information-sharing and law enforcement; and finally, ensuring that the international response to terrorism, in particular, when involving the use of force and the imposition of coercive measures, shall be guided by the principles set out in the Charter and in international law.

Mr. Ileka (Democratic Republic of the Congo) (*spoke in French*): I would like to add my voice to those of other speakers at this tribune to convey to you, Sir, my keen and heartfelt congratulations on the occasion of your election to the presidency of the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly. I am convinced

that your wisdom, intellectual ability and diplomatic talents will see us through to a successful conclusion of this session tarnished by the terrible events of 11 September.

Allow me to express my regard for the merit of your predecessor, Mr. Harri Holkeri and congratulate him for the know-how and ability with which he carried out his difficult task during his presidency over the fifty-fifth General Assembly.

Finally, allow me to congratulate once more Mr. Kofi Annan for his outstanding re-election as Secretary-General and to convey to him the full support of the Democratic Republic of the Congo for the outstanding efforts he ceaselessly performs in the defence of human rights and the principles and goals of the United Nations Charter, and for his numerous and praiseworthy initiatives for peace and international security throughout the world, and in my country, in particular.

The present debate is additional proof, if such were necessary, that the tragedy of 11 September 2001, which has plunged the American Government and its people into mourning, does not affect Americans alone. The great number of victims of widely varying origins says much. There are also many among us whose relatives or friends were among the victims.

From the very first hours following the tragedy, His Excellency Major-General Joseph Kabila, President of the Republic, expressed the full sympathy and solidarity of the Congolese population for their good friends, the people of the United States of America. On that occasion, he asked that the perpetrators of that horrible crime be located, brought to justice and receive exemplary punishment.

We deplore the horrendous consequences of this tragedy, which had proved once again — as if there were any need to do so — that international terrorism is a matter of utmost seriousness and that joint action on the part of the entire international community and all peace-loving States is required in order to put an end to it.

My delegation believes that the participation of the entire international community in the struggle against this scourge depends on the commitment of all States to respect international conventions in this area, through adherence to these instruments and the taking of the necessary measures at the national level to ensure their full implementation.

Although the provisions of our penal code do not include a clear definition of terrorism, as is the case in a good number of countries, my country has always advocated a policy of prevention and suppression of international terrorism, at the domestic, regional and international levels. At the domestic level — and this has been the case since 21 February 1950 — the decree installing a regime for firearms and ammunition, as amended, subjects to the authorization of the President of the Republic the importing of firearms, their deposit in State armories and public storehouses, their withdrawal from these sites, and their transport, trafficking, possession, licensing, donation, abandonment and sale. Since that time, Congolese law has forbidden anyone who is not engaged in military service to possess firearms, in particular revolvers, pistols, submachine guns, rifles or any kind of automatic firearm capable of firing in bursts.

At the regional level, my country is party to the Organization of African Unity Convention of 14 July 1999 on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism. In its foreign policy, the Democratic Republic of the Congo understands that the use of force cannot settle the problems confronting the world today and that in the struggle against terrorism there is a need to create a universal conscience and a universal union that can eliminate this scourge and others that threaten the very survival of the human race.

It is for this reason that my country has signed and ratified several global conventions dealing with the question of international terrorism. These include the Tokyo Convention of 14 September 1963 on Offenses and Certain Other Acts Committed on Board Aircraft; the Hague Convention of 16 December 1970 for the Suppression of Unlawful Seizure of Aircraft; the Montreal Convention of 23 September 1971 for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Civil Aviation; the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Crimes against Internationally Protected Persons, including Diplomatic Agents, adopted by the General Assembly on 14 December 1973; the International Convention against the Taking of Hostages, also adopted by the General Assembly on 17 December 1979; and the Montreal Protocol of 24 February 1988 for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts of Violence at Airports Serving International Civil Aviation, supplementary to the Convention for the

Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Civil Aviation.

Moreover, consultations are now under way for my country's accession to other relevant instruments to combat terrorism, including, inter alia, the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings, adopted by the General Assembly on 15 December 1997, and the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, adopted by the Assembly on 9 December 1999.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo has always advocated fighting terrorism in all of its aspects and manifestations. It therefore welcomes the adoption by the Security Council of resolution 1373 (2001) of 28 September 2001, which in our view is an important first step towards stemming and then eradicating this scourge. However, my delegation believes that a draft convention for the suppression of acts of terrorism would be of considerable assistance and would serve to supplement significantly the existing anti-terrorist conventions and serve as an effective legal framework to fight and deter acts of terrorism. It would be desirable for the delegations involved to moderate their positions so as to make it possible for the General Assembly to adopt this convention as quickly as possible.

My delegation also believes that the concept of terrorism must not be limited solely to acts carried out by individuals or isolated groups. It must cover a much broader concept that also includes large-scale organized acts that States use as a political instrument, the nature and consequences of which are extremely serious. It is this State terrorism, with incalculable consequences, that countries neighbouring ours, having crossed our borders in order to besiege the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in violation of the United Nations Charter, are now practising against the peaceful Congolese people with total impunity.

If the Congolese people and Government have hastened to demonstrate their solidarity with the friendly people of the United States following the 11 September tragedy, it is because the Democratic Republic of the Congo and its people have been living for more than three years now with armed aggression and the occupation of their territory by those neighbouring countries, and are therefore aware of the genuine meaning of the word "horror".

The manifestations of that daily horror are daily massacres of the civilian population, summary and extrajudicial executions, the deportation of entire populations, the taking of hostages, hijacking, the illegal capture and destruction of aircraft, the systematic rape and burying alive of women, destitution, other serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law, the deliberate and criminal spread of HIV/AIDS, and so forth. Horror has therefore become a familiar phenomenon to the people of my country because of the regular armies of those neighbouring countries.

At the head of one of these aggressor terrorist and rogue States is an unbalanced individual who did not hesitate for one minute to commit his country to the path of State terrorism. This individual, who has continued to flout the entire Great Lakes region and the international community, bears primary responsibility for the death of millions of Congolese citizens. He is also at present the sole obstacle to the restoration of lasting peace and dignity to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. His hatred of the majority of his own fellow citizens does not allow him to see that the time is now right for the establishment and building of peace, justice and democracy in our region, for the benefit, of course, of the peoples who live there.

The events of 11 September must be of the greatest concern to us. At a time of such colossal suffering and grief we need more than ever to renew our dedication to the cause of peace. My delegation believes that it is called for to speed up and rapidly conclude the debate on the adoption of a universal definition of terrorism, as well as to draw up a detailed, comprehensive anti-terrorism convention. This idea has already received the unanimous backing of the member States of the Non-Aligned Movement, to which my country belongs, whose Twelfth Summit, held in Durban, South Africa, in 1998 reaffirmed the will of member States to refrain from organizing or facilitating acts of terrorism on the territory of other States or from participating in them. On the same occasion, the Summit unequivocally condemned all political, diplomatic, moral or material support for terrorism in all of its forms and aspects.

At its fifty-third session, the General Assembly decided to convene a high-level conference in the year 2000 to formulate an appropriate response on the part of the international community to the phenomenon of international terrorism and to all its forms and

manifestations. So far that dream has not been realized, and my delegation has good reason to believe that the time has finally come to give serious thought to this.

In conclusion, I would like to pay a stirring tribute to Mr. George Pataki and Mr. Rudolph Giuliani, respectively the Governor of New York State and the Mayor of New York City, as well as to the population of the city, for their outstanding and responsible actions in the face of this terrible ordeal they are enduring.

Mr. Loizaga (Paraguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the beginning of this session we welcomed the decision of the General Assembly to examine the item before us today and pledged our full and firm support so that our Organization might assume its rightful role, with a firm, vigorous and unequivocal stand with regard to taking all measures necessary to combat and eliminate terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, in accordance with the provisions of our Charter and norms of international law.

That decision of the Assembly resulted from the tragic events of 11 September, which cast into mourning not only the United States, but the entire civilized world, and affected the security of nations. Events of this nature are inconceivable and unjustifiable, and remind us of our vulnerability to individuals and groups of individuals that commit indiscriminate and barbaric acts of violence unthinkable for civilized human beings. These horrible acts, whose extremely grave consequences affected more than 80 nations, including Paraguay, which lost two of its nationals, have definitively changed the international context in which this new century is beginning. Therefore, the community of nations must assume the firmest commitment and resolve for international peace and security.

It would be difficult to forget the moments of pain, powerlessness and grief of millions of persons throughout the world, of the families of the victims and of those who heroically lost their lives saving others, whose distressing images were seen the world over and are still very much on our minds.

The President of the Republic of Paraguay, Luis Ángel González Macchi, expressed on behalf of the Government and people of my country, as soon as the events became known, condemnation of and outrage at the tragedy. He also expressed solidarity with the people and the Government of the United States of America and the families of the victims. He pledged the complete and resolute support of the Government of Paraguay for the United States Government in all its efforts to identify and bring to justice the perpetrators, as well as those who provide shelter to and support these criminals. These acts are intolerable in the building of an international order based on the principles of justice, international law and human rights. This is the opinion of the Government of Paraguay. Thus we are not neutral, nor shall we be ambiguous in the face of such a cowardly crime that took so many innocent lives. We shall continue to support all the efforts of this Organization and the international community to root out these criminal practices.

On 23 September the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Paraguay, José Antonio Moreno Ruffinelli, went from Washington to New York to see what remained after the brutal attack on the World Trade Center and, as one more citizen, to express his solidarity with New York and the victims of this terrible tragedy.

As soon as the events occurred, the Government of the Republic of Paraguay adopted internal measures for greater control and security regarding entry to and departure from our territory and for a broader exchange of information and greater coordination between the various Government departments, within the norms of our domestic law and those of freedom of movement.

In the framework of the judiciary, under the auspices of the Supreme Court of Justice, in close cooperation with the interior ministry, we are preparing and studying a preliminary draft of a law to include in penal legislation the definition of the crime of terrorism.

In the regional framework, Paraguay had the honour of presenting to the Permanent Council of the Organization of American States (OAS) the resolution, agreed by consensus by the 34 members, convening the Twenty-third Meeting of Consultation of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the hemisphere, with a view to urgent consideration of this subject within the OAS.

Paraguay also supported Brazil's timely initiative to request the convening of the consultative body of the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance, a collective-defence mechanism of the American countries. It was agreed there that terrorist attacks against the United States of America are considered to be attacks against all the States of the hemisphere and

that therefore effective reciprocal assistance must be provided in order to counter such attacks.

In the subregional context, my country requested the convening on 28 September of the Interior Ministers of the countries of the Southern Cone Common Market (MERCOSUR) — Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay — to undertake the broadest possible cooperation among ourselves and with other countries for an exchange of information, studies and actions against terrorist activities; establish a standing working group to evaluate joint and coordinated action against terrorism; and consider action to be included in the regional security plan, in accordance with the resolution adopted by the Ministers of the Interior. The associated MERCOSUR countries of Bolivia and Chile were also invited to participate in this work.

Since the twenty-seventh session of the General Assembly, in 1972, the item on measures to eliminate international terrorism has constantly, but timidly, been on our Organization's agenda. Various factors, including ideological ones that prevailed during the cold war, obstructed decision-taking and valid measures against the unjustifiable practices of terrorism. We have had to experience the tragedy that we witnessed first-hand to mobilize a consensus on the urgent need to have a rapid and perhaps drastic response to these types of criminal acts. The damage is measured not only in the loss of thousands of lives and major losses to the international economy and finance. In addition — and this, too, is a serious matter — through the technology of the communications media, which showed the entire world live and direct the distressing images from New York, Washington and Pennsylvania, an entire generation of children and adolescents has been marked by fear and insecurity; unable to find reasons, they ask themselves why these inhuman acts occurred and what kind of future awaits them.

Our Organization cannot wait another 30 years to find an answer to how to confront and eradicate terrorism. It must also make every effort to take effective collective action to prevent and eradicate threats to peace, as called for by the Charter.

The United Nations, through the resolutions adopted on 12 September by the Security Council and the General Assembly, has reacted rapidly and unanimously with expressions of unequivocal condemnation of the events of 11 September, and has thus given clear evidence of its determination to begin the fight against this terrible evil. Last Friday the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1373 (2001), which undoubtedly marks a new stage in the Council's work, which, in fulfilment of the responsibilities given to it by our Charter, shows its firm resolve to contribute to the eradication of acts such as those committed on 11 September, that constitute a threat to international peace and security. The resolution binds all States to unite and act jointly to combat all means of terrorism, the perpetrators, their accomplices and those who harbour them. In this respect, Paraguay is determined to act in accordance with the above-mentioned resolution and, in keeping with the principles and norms of international law and its own internal law, to adopt measures and take actions that are necessary for the effective implementation of that resolution.

In the current circumstances, it is imperative that an international legal framework function effectively in order to prevent and respond to terrorist and criminal acts efficiently and rapidly. In this respect, we have a basis of international conventions on the subject adopted under the auspices of our Organization.

The Government of the Republic of Paraguay has authorized me to sign, in the coming days, the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, adopted by this Assembly in 1999, which, once adopted by our Congress, will be part of internal law in my country. Furthermore, my delegation considers that progress must be made to conclude the two conventions that are now under discussion in the Sixth Committee: the comprehensive convention on terrorism, submitted by the delegation of India, and the draft convention on nuclear terrorism, an initiative of the Russian Federation. Any time that we may lose in the strengthening of our legal framework will be an opportunity for terrorists to increase their own power.

The fight against terrorism requires protracted and concerted efforts by the United Nations and the international community, just as it necessitates strengthening and deepening international cooperation at every level. In this respect, we appeal to the developed countries to give those States that so request the needed assistance in technology and training and financial assistance in order to help them increase their anti-terrorist capacities. Likewise, my delegation believes it to be of fundamental importance to give the

relevant units of the Secretariat the resources needed in order to strengthen and enhance their capacity to collect and analyse information; it is equally important to give help to those countries that need cooperation — in particular, in order to implement the recently adopted resolution 1373 (2001) of the Security Council.

In conclusion, this General Assembly, the universal organ of the United Nations, must take the political decision to act collectively, effectively and concretely in the face of the current circumstances, and assume its responsibility in the fight against terrorism in all its manifestations. The discussion on the issue that is before us today must be a first step in that direction. At this session the Assembly must go beyond mere statements of condemnation and solidarity. We must pledge today — in a joint, coordinated and concerted way, and for the medium and long term — as is expected of this Organization, to fulfil our moral, legal and political obligation to construct, for ourselves and for future generations, a legacy of democracy, freedom, peace and security.

Miss Durrant (Jamaica): The course of human history was altered on 11 September when the world was shocked into disbelief at the despicable acts of terrorism perpetrated in New York, Washington, D.C., and Pennsylvania. This was an attack not only against the United States but against all of humanity. Jamaica condemns all acts of terrorism. We condemn those who carry out such acts and those who provide terrorists with support of any kind. My country, like many others in this Hall, suffered the loss of lives of our citizens, and we all grieve together. All acts of terrorism are criminal and are contrary to societal norms. No just cause can be served by acts of terrorism.

Since 11 September, the international community has focused on the many challenges we face in dealing with this scourge of the society of nations. So far, our actions have been resolute and unequivocal, but we have only just begun. We have taken only the first steps, albeit important ones. The true test will be the level of effectiveness achieved in implementing the decisions we have already taken and those to come.

On Friday last, the Security Council adopted resolution 1373 (2001), reaffirming the will of the international community to rid the world of terrorism and, in so doing, to establish a legal framework for action by Member States. This decisive action by the Security Council followed that taken on 12 September by the Security Council as well as by the General Assembly, whereby we declared our intentions to work together to put an end to the scourge of international terrorism, which threatens international peace and security. Terrorism threatens us all, and as recent events have demonstrated, no member of the international community is far removed from its effects. It also confirmed our belief that international terrorism can be defeated only if we work together, in a collective effort, to eliminate the sources of support for terrorists.

We believe that it is imperative for all nations and all peoples of the world to join in a concerted and unremitting course of action, or series of actions, to defeat terrorism. We must reconfirm our commitment to ensure that those who carry out or support terrorist acts are once and for all brought to account. There must be no refuge or safe haven for terrorists and those who support, aid or abet them.

We must be guided by the principle established by the General Assembly in its resolution 2625 (XXV) of October 1970, which bears repeating:

> "Every State has the duty to refrain from organizing, instigating, assisting or participating in ... terrorist acts in another State or acquiescing in organized activities within its territory directed towards the commission of such acts".

This is an affirmation of good-neighbourliness and comity among nations. These are our basic obligations if we are to ensure that the rule of law and justice prevails throughout the global community.

Jamaica has stated in the past, and reiterates today, that the most effective response to these heinous acts continues to be full cooperation at the international level. It is in this context that we fully support the development of a comprehensive and effective legal framework to combat terrorism. This includes the work being undertaken by the Ad Hoc Committee on terrorism to draft a comprehensive convention on international terrorism. Such a universally accepted legal framework will provide for the level of cooperation and coordination recognized as essential for effective action by Member States. We urge the Committee to move quickly to decide on the major outstanding issues so that action on the convention may be taken by the General Assembly at this session.

There are already a number of international conventions that provide a basis for concerted action against terrorism. Taken together, those legal instruments provide a foundation for addressing terrorism through appropriate cooperation and information exchange. Jamaica is undertaking a review of those conventions with a view to signing and, where appropriate, ratifying and fully implementing those not already in effect in our country. We urge all Member States to do likewise.

In the meantime, there are a number of important steps we can take to combat terrorism and the supporters of terrorism. Globalization and the revolution in communications technology, which now define much of our lives, have presented us with new challenges in the fight against terrorism. In that context, last week Jamaica, along with a number of countries from the Caribbean Community, signed the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

Transnational organized crime, which manifests itself in several forms of criminal activity — including illicit narcotics production and trafficking, money laundering and illegal arms transfers — has taken advantage of advances in technology to broaden its reach across international boundaries. The international community must also take advantage of technological advances and available expertise to wage our battle against terrorism. In advancing our cause, those who have the know-how must be prepared to share it with those who lack it. To that end, our focus must take into consideration all aspects of terrorism and effectively deal with all instruments at the disposal of terrorists.

In any consideration of terrorism particular attention must be paid to efforts aimed at countering the traffic in small arms and light weapons, which undoubtedly contribute to the spread and escalation of terrorism. The international community must move forward in concert on this most important issue.

There are a number of immediate actions required of us as Member States. We must take action to prevent and suppress the financing of terrorists. We must remove their ability to move funds across borders to facilitate their activities and to traverse the globe with such ease. We must deny access to funds used by terrorists and their supporters without delay. We must refrain from providing any form of support at the State, group or individual level. We must eliminate all safe havens for terrorists and their supporters. We must share vital information necessary to work effectively in a coordinated and cooperative international effort to combat terrorism. We must serve the cause of justice by eliminating impunity for all terrorist acts, utilizing all lawful means at our disposal. We must always be mindful of the fact that terrorism largely visits suffering upon innocent civilians — including women and children, who are often killed, maimed or orphaned as a result, thereby causing humanitarian tragedies.

The international community must now act resolutely and deliberately to secure a safe world for ourselves and for the generations to come. We must act in step with each other, and together as the community of nations, in carrying out the decisions we take in the United Nations. We must assert and support the leadership role of the Organization in the fight against international terrorism. The Security Council has begun the work necessary for effective action; the General Assembly must act likewise. Let us go forward from this Hall united in our determination. Let us reaffirm our collective will and let our actions in pursuit of this cause surpass our words.

In conclusion, I wish to associate the Jamaican delegation with the statement that will be delivered later in this debate on behalf of the Caribbean Community.

Ms. Rasi (Finland): I wish to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your election to preside over this session of the General Assembly. You have the full support of the delegation of Finland in your very demanding work.

Finland fully subscribes to the statement made on behalf of the European Union by the representative of Belgium, Mr. Jean de Ruyt, as well as to the conclusions and the plan of action adopted by the European Council at its extraordinary meeting in Brussels on 21 September.

We condemn unequivocally the terrorist attacks in New York, Washington and Pennsylvania, and we express our solidarity with the United States. I also wish to express my Government's deep sympathy and sincere condolences to the victims and their families, as well as to the people and Government of the United States. The horrendous events of 11 September have profoundly shocked all nations, big and small.

While those events were unprecedented and unimaginable in many respects, they also share a number of common traits with other terrorist attacks in recent years. One such trend is the increasing lethality of the attacks. Their anonymity is another new phenomenon, as those who commit such acts rely on networks of undetermined groups and organizations. The lack of discernible organizational structures and political programmes makes those groups and organizations invisible adversaries. The first, and by no means the easiest, challenge for counter-terrorism is often that of identifying and locating the adversary.

Any Government's ability to craft an effective response to terrorist attacks will, in those circumstances, depend on international support, coordination and cooperation. The European Union has called for the broadest possible global coalition against terrorism and has rightly emphasized the primordial role of the United Nations in that respect. Terrorist acts constitute a threat to international peace and security. The resolutions and statements of the Security Council, in particular last Friday's resolution 1373 (2001), send a powerful message that terrorism must be combated decisively.

The General Assembly of the United Nations has done important and indispensable work in recent years to build a consensus on the basic principle that terrorist acts, wherever and by whomever they are committed, are criminal and unjustifiable by any political, religious or philosophical considerations. Terrorism may grow out of inequality and oppression, but such circumstances do not justify terrorist acts. There is no just terrorism, whatever the causes. At the same time, understanding and eradicating the underlying causes of terrorism pose a challenge to societies and to the international community.

While terrorist organizations increasingly seek their inspiration in different religions, it is clear that no religion can condone terrorism. The European Union has categorically rejected any equation of groups of fanatical terrorism with the Arab and Muslim world. Acts of terrorism pose a serious challenge to States and Governments all over the world. It is the global reach of the problem that makes it necessary for the international community to respond to it in a coordinated manner.

While no category of response which is in accordance with international law can be excluded, efforts to suppress terrorism must always respect human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The 12 conventions elaborated under United Nations auspices to prevent and suppress terrorist acts provide an essential framework for the fight against terrorism. We join the call upon all countries to sign and ratify and to fully implement those conventions. Finland has signed all 12 conventions and will soon have ratified 10 of them. The internal preparations required for the ratification of the two most recent conventions will be carried out as a matter of priority.

The 1997 International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings covers all attacks by means of explosive or other lethal devices, including radioactive materials and chemical or biological agents and toxins directed against government or infrastructure facilities, public transportation systems or places of public use. It is a particularly effective instrument which expands the legal basis for international cooperation in the investigation, prosecution and extradition of persons who engage in terrorist crimes.

Organizing the attacks of 11 September would not have been possible without established transnational networks of support and funding. As a matter of fact, most terrorist crimes would not be possible without financial resources from supporters. The 1999 International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism acknowledges that those who finance terrorist crimes are equally responsible and should be treated as severely as those who commit the crimes. The Convention applies to the wilful collection or provision of funds, legally or illegally, with the intention, or in the knowledge, that they are to be used for terrorist acts. Once in force and fully implemented, that Convention will significantly improve the ability of Governments to work together to reduce the threat of terrorism.

Even though the scope of the existing conventions is fairly comprehensive, there are still gaps to be filled. The discussions on a comprehensive convention on international terrorism, on the basis of a draft text submitted by India, are under way in the Sixth Committee. Such a convention would strengthen the comprehensive network of conventions and would enhance the impact of the measures taken in the United Nations over the past quarter of a century. All efforts should be concentrated on the upcoming third round of

negotiations on finding solutions that will make the convention generally acceptable. The draft convention for the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism should also be completed as soon as possible.

The few weeks since 11 September have seen a unanimous condemnation of the terrorist attacks as a violation of the fundamental values of the United Nations. Success in the fight against terrorism will to a large extent depend on continued and continually strengthened international cooperation. A whole array of different means — legal, law enforcement and diplomatic — will be needed, along with close and effective cooperation at practical levels.

Finland unequivocally condemns terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. We will participate both nationally and as a member of the European Union in formulating and implementing a coordinated and coherent response to the threat of terrorism.

The President: I assure the representative of Finland that, in discharging my responsibilities as President, I shall do my best to follow the tradition set by her compatriot, His Excellency Mr. Harri Holkeri.

Mr. Aboud (Comoros) (*spoke in Arabic*): It is written in the Holy Koran,

> "Ye are the best of peoples, evolved for mankind, enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong, and believing in Allah." (*III:110*)

(*spoke in English*)

At the outset, my delegation would like to associate itself with the statement made yesterday by the representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya on behalf of the Arab Group. And, since my country is the victim of occupation, my delegation fully supports what he said in that connection, that

> "we maintain that foreign occupation is the greatest enemy of freedom — the freedom of countries, peoples, territories and humankind." (*A/56/PV.14*)

(*spoke in French*)

I wish, on behalf of the people and the Government of the Islamic Federal Republic of the Comoros, to convey heartfelt condolences to the families of the victims of the 11 September attacks and to the people and the Government of the United States. Through our head of State, Colonel Azali Assoumani, the Government of the Comoros has condemned those attacks on human dignity, and we do so again today.

On behalf of my delegation, and on my own account, I wish to say how delighted we are, Sir, to see you presiding over the work of the General Assembly. The highest authorities of my country will congratulate you on your election in the course of the forthcoming general debate. Now, let me reaffirm my delegation's confidence and support as you work to discharge your responsibilities as President.

The work of the Organization has been seriously disturbed in many respects. But, more than our work, it is our hearts that have been profoundly touched. In our dignity and our humanity, we have all been shaken by the sad events of 11 September. The inhuman acts of rare barbarity that struck New York and other places were intended to harm all of humankind.

At the Millennium Summit, held last year in this very Hall, our heads of State or Government evoked the true cause of the terrorism that threatens democracy and freedom in all our countries. They concluded that it was necessary to eradicate it by all means possible. Here, the Government of the Comoros is pleased at the determination shown by the Security Council. We unreservedly endorse the Council's support for the struggle against terrorism, and in particular last week's Security Council resolution 1373 (1201), which clearly and unequivocally condemns all acts, methods, financing and practices of terrorism, and which highlights the need for the international community effectively and efficiently to respond to terrorism.

Of course, to combat the globalization of terrorism — a scourge that transcends the geographical borders of our countries and that crosses all lines of religion and custom — only international cooperation and solidarity can ensure the success of this vast enterprise. My Government believes that, in order to effectively combat this scourge, which threatens our cultures and our societies, integrated coordination on the part of our States and, more specifically, within the framework of our universal Organization, is the most effective and reliable course ahead.

My Government urgently calls for cooperation on the part of the international community in order effectively to fight terrorism in all its forms. Only international determination, in the context of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, will make it possible to put an end to these heinous acts. Indeed,

terrorism spares no region of the world and no sector of society.

The Government of Comoros believes that we must urgently consider taking objective and concrete action aimed at combating the evil of terrorism by tackling its very roots. Regrettably, terrorism is not a new phenomenon, but, in the conflagration of 11 September, it reached proportions that are beyond comprehension.

The search for adequate, global and lasting solutions must become a priority in the struggle that has now begun against this evil. Towards that end, my delegation endorses the statement made by Secretary-General Kofi Annan at the opening of the fifty-sixth session:

> "No effort should be spared in bringing the perpetrators to justice in a clear and transparent process". *(A/56/PV.7)*

The clear, comprehensive and concise report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization, which warrants our full attention, should continue to serve as a crucial tool that will help guide our thinking and rationally direct our future work. My delegation supports the broad lines underlying that document, and we are glad to welcome and vigorously support the wise proposals of the Secretary-General.

The same concerns as in the past, unfortunately, are part of the picture. Conflicts seem to persist in many regions. We recall the wisdom that prevailed at the Millennium Summit, during which it was stated that peace and international security could never be dissociated from the underdevelopment that prevails in many of our countries.

The conflicts in these countries stem from diverse causes that are related, to varying degrees, to problems of underdevelopment. This means that we need a multifaceted response and that we must propose global and concrete action.

The need to intensify multifaceted international cooperation is clear. We must meet the challenges posed by the need to strengthen national and regional capacities for sustainable human development.

The report of the United Nations Development Programme this year shows that we are still far from meeting our objectives, even though the eradication of poverty by the year 2015 remains one of our priorities. Poverty, AIDS, problems related to public health, climate change and the damage done to our environment, problems related to education and to the rights of the child, and terrorism — all of these questions deserve our particular attention and adequate responses. To this end, cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations must be as broad-based and intensive as possible.

We must extend, through concrete and consistent operations, the multifaceted presence of the international community in countries that have already begun the process of détente, are seeing an improvement in their situations and have already started out on the road of peace and reconciliation, in particular Sierra Leone, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Macedonia, and, to a lesser extent, the Comoros and its Fomboni reconciliation process.

My country, the Comoros, has been the victim in recent years of continuing interference, through European mercenaries, that has led to the successive assassinations of two heads of State. Another one was deposed, and yet another was deported to an island in the Indian Ocean. Not only that, but now we are plagued by the evil of separatism. Nonetheless, we are prepared to move forward.

Let us encourage all of those countries, as well as the Middle East peace process, to move ahead with strict respect for the Charter of the United Nations and the resolutions of the Security Council.

On behalf of my delegation, I should like to emphasize once again that my country is committed to the fight against terrorism and will continue to combat it firmly, with strict respect for the principles of international law. We are prepared to support all regional and international initiatives to develop cooperation and coordination aimed at combating and eliminating terrorism in all its forms.

In this context, my Government has taken national measures, and it has also signed and ratified instruments for the struggle against terrorism — instruments prepared, inter alia, by the League of Arab States, the Organization of African Unity, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the United Nations.

My delegation has always been in favour of equitable international justice. In this respect, we are

now participating in the discussions of the eighth session of the Preparatory Commission for the International Criminal Court, and we have pledged, after having signed it, to ratify the Rome Statute in the near future.

Once again the Government of the Comoros condemns in the most forceful terms terrorism in all of its forms. We express our horror at such acts, which indiscriminately kill innocent civilians.

My delegation reiterates its support for the Secretary-General. We encourage him to pursue relentlessly his fight for a world of peace and tolerance, and we invite all delegations of fraternal and friendly countries to work together in their common aspiration to maintain peace and international security, with respect for the principles of human rights, democratic freedoms and good governance, in order to achieve harmony in the world and in the best interests of human civilization.

Mr. De Rivero (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): I cannot begin my statement without expressing the outrage of the Peruvian Government and people at the barbaric attack that we witnessed last 11 September. That attack was conceived in such a machiavellian and cruel fashion as to take the largest possible number of human lives and cause the greatest physical damage possible.

Peru, which has lost more than 25,000 human lives and valuable material resources to terrorism, and the many other countries that are also victims of this scourge feel, as if it were their own, the pain, helplessness and the indignation experienced by a nation when it is attacked in such an infamous manner by a faceless enemy. We therefore extend our solidarity and our sincerest condolences to the people and authorities of the United States, and we wish them strength and wisdom in overcoming these difficult times.

While globalization has brought undeniable benefits and advantages, it has also spread throughout the world problems that once affected only certain countries or regions. It is clear that the same thing has happened as concerns the phenomenon of terrorism; it has become globalized. Today, no country can be immune to the devastating effects of terrorism.

But we must understand terrorism. It is a complex phenomenon. Fanaticism is often intimately related to drug trafficking and common crime. We often cannot tell where crime begins and terrorism ends. This is a new, difficult struggle that requires innovative and sophisticated methods. It can never, ever be won by military force. It can be won by intelligence and by an alliance of the majority of citizens who seek to lead a safe and decent life.

Terrorism is the main violator of human rights and constitutes a crime against humanity. Its bloody practices, its innocent, random victims and its disdain for human life make it entirely condemnable. Any cause that might be invoked to justify a terrorist act loses its legitimacy forever because of the inhuman methods and nature.

The item of terrorism within the United Nations was added to the General Assembly's agenda in 1972. Since then, this subject has been discussed in this Organization on two basic levels. First, various resolutions of political condemnation of terrorism have been adopted and, secondly, attempts have been made to establish a balanced legal framework to prevent manifestations of terrorism, punish those responsible and reinforce international cooperation.

Although 12 conventions have been adopted within this Organization against different aspects of terrorism, we note with concern that the number of States parties to those conventions is far from representing the broad consensus that supports the political messages rejecting and condemning this scourge. It is indispensable that, in the struggle against terrorism, the political discourse be reified within an appropriate legal framework. In this respect, special mention should be made of the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, which seeks to combat terrorist activities in their most sensitive aspect: the supply, collection and transfer of funds to support them. We hope that the provisions of that Convention will enter into force as soon as possible.

The conventions that are still being negotiated within the Ad Hoc Committee established by resolution 51/210 — the draft convention for the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism and the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism — must be concluded soon in order to send a clear message of the shared resolve to defeat terrorism. Any delay in their adoption might send the wrong message of the international community's weakness or lack of unity.

In designing the global legal framework against terrorism, the complexity and scope of the definition of terrorism should not and must not hinder the international community's adoption of urgent, practical and effective measures to prevent and punish acts of terrorism and to establish appropriate punishment for their perpetrators. Among these urgent, practical measures in the struggle against terrorism, extradition must be compulsory to facilitate the prosecution of those who commit terrorist acts and of those who seek refuge or protection in other countries.

My Government welcomes the recent approval by the Security Council of resolution 1373 (2001), which establishes a Committee to oversee a number of necessary practical and effective measures with a view to the elimination of terrorism. In the near future, my Government will also report to that Committee on the measures it has taken and will take in the struggle against terrorism. We assure the Committee of our full cooperation.

In this struggle, possibly more than in any other, the States need each other because of the unsuspected magnitude of the networks for the preparation, supply, financing and sheltering of terrorist groups. In this scenario, international cooperation in intelligence, police work, legal practice, the regulation of financial transfers and extradition, inter alia, becomes simply indispensable. It is indispensable, but it is not enough. As Secretary-General Kofi Annan affirmed recently, the only way to face this common enemy is through cooperation and partnership among all the social forces of a nation: the State; the private sector, including banks and financial institutions; the academic sector, with its research capacities; and civil society, with its advocacy of human rights in all forms.

The struggle that Peru waged against terrorism in the past would have been easier and would have claimed many fewer human lives had the international community understood at that time the urgent need for that partnership. In spite of this, we managed to overcome terrorism and we are willing to place our own experience at the service of the international community.

Terrorism so affected my own country that Peru convened the First Inter-American Specialized Conference On Terrorism in 1996. It culminated in the adoption of a Declaration in which the members of the Organization of American States reiterated their most forceful condemnation of all terrorist methods and acts; wherever they are committed, whomever may be their agents and whatever the methods and motivation with which they attempt to justify them. At the same time, and in accordance with that Declaration, a Plan of Action to prevent, fight and eliminate terrorism was approved, serving as the basis for the subsequent establishment of an Inter-American Committee on Terrorism at the Second Inter-American Conference on the subject held in Mar del Plata, Argentina, in November 1998.

Recently, at the twenty-third Meeting of Consultation of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Assembly of American States held in Washington, D.C., on 19 September, a resolution was adopted that, in addition to forcefully rejecting terrorism, proposed practical measures to eradicate it. It notes that the struggle against terrorism must be conducted — and this is important — in full respect for the law, human rights and democratic institutions in order to preserve the rule of law and democratic values and freedoms. At that time, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Peru proposed the elaboration of an inter-American convention against terrorism, which should contain clear obligations with regard to cooperation in the exchange of information and in the prosecution, extradition, judging and punishment of those involved in terrorist acts. Peru will continue to coordinate action at the inter-American level to make this convention against terrorism a reality as soon as possible.

Peru has shown its commitment to the struggle against terrorism by recently undertaking a number of international measures in this respect, including signing the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism; acceding to the Protocol for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Fixed Platforms Located on the Continental Shelf; acceding to the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Maritime Navigation; and acceding to the International Convention against the Taking of Hostages.

Furthermore, the parliament of Peru is in the process of considering draft legislation to accede to the 1997 International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings and to ratify the 1999 International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism.

Peru has always been involved in the fight against terrorism; we have suffered from terrorism and we have overcome it. That is why we are ready to engage in intensive international cooperation to prevent acts of terror and punish the terrorists.

Mr. Widodo (Indonesia): My delegation deems the convening of the General Assembly to debate this issue to be both timely and appropriate, given the tragic sequence of events on 11 September in New York, Washington D.C. and Pennsylvania. Even today, more than three weeks later, the enormity and gravity of that carnage is still becoming clear. Indonesia, together with the rest of the international community, was shocked to hear that a great number of innocent people of many nationalities lost their lives or were wounded.

Let me therefore take this opportunity to reiterate once again the deepest sympathy of my Government and of the Indonesian people to the Government and the people of the United States and to the other countries directly affected, especially to the bereaved families, in their hour of grief. Acts of terrorism such as these can never be justified, regardless of their objectives; they violate the sanctity of human life and run counter to the basic tenets of all cultures and religious faiths.

Indonesia has in the past condemned all acts of terrorism, in line with its consistent position that such indiscriminate violence can never be allowed to subjugate the rule of law. As we are all aware, the scourge of terrorism is by no means a new form of illegal action. From the dawn of history, terrorism has afflicted many nations and societies, having a severe impact on their economic and social development. In our contemporary world, with all its complexities, terrorism has become an intolerable menace, endangering peace, stability and harmonious coexistence among States. Consequently, there is an urgent need to mount a universal response within a framework of concerted cooperation to rid our societies of this dangerous phenomenon.

The solemnity of the current deliberations reflects our profound concern that acts of terrorism, with their horrendous toll in human lives and material devastation, are tearing at the very fabric of civilized societies. They are incompatible with the principles of the United Nations Charter. Indeed, they go against the very raison d'etre of this Organization, whose goal is to achieve peace, development and the rule of law; freedom, justice and independence for all peoples; human rights, democratic values, good governance and tolerance; and understanding and cooperation among members of the international community, regardless of race, religion or creed. These are the goals that all nations strive for and are committed to fostering.

As President Megawati Soekarnoputri has stated, the recent tragedies underline the importance of international cooperation in eradicating terrorism anywhere in the world. Indonesia stands ready to cooperate. It is in this context that the United Nations, as the only multilateral organization with universal membership, is uniquely placed to advance global efforts and to take necessary and effective measures to combat this alarming increase in terrorist activity. It is the only appropriate forum to accord legitimacy to undertaking the resolute action needed to eradicate this phenomenon. Our approach should, however, be based on justice and fairness, rather than coercion and prejudice. We should guard against hasty decisions, which may prove to be counter-productive. As this is a global problem requiring a global response, the United Nations can also reconcile disparate views and thereby harmonize efforts in a spirit of cooperation and partnership.

At the same time, it is important to underscore that terrorism consists simply of indiscriminate acts of violence aimed at the civilized world, and that attempts to depict it as a conflict between the West and the Islamic world are patently misleading and absolutely wrong. For Islam is a religion of peace that neither teaches nor condones violence. Indonesia has itself experienced acts of terrorism emanating from separatists and extremist movements. This is incompatible with our cherished objectives of national unity and with the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Indonesian nation.

In the past, there has been strong evidence that threats and acts of terrorism may either originate from inside the borders of the country affected or be cross-border in nature. Hence, national efforts will not suffice unless they are accompanied by regional endeavours. This is the principal reason why President Megawati Soekarnoputri recently visited neighbouring countries in the Association of South-East Asian Nations to strengthen a regional approach. Such an approach has become crucial to eliminating international terrorism, which has often been found to have close links to other transnational crimes, such as

those of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, money laundering and the trafficking of illegal aliens.

In the same vein, Indonesia considers international cooperation to be imperative. This should include the exchange of information and the training of personnel to deal with transnational crime, with a view to augmenting capacity and institution-building and formulating legal mechanisms and instruments. At the present time, my Government is in the process of building upon, or has already established, such forms of cooperation with a number of countries. In this regard, Indonesia fully associates itself with the commitments of the Non-Aligned Movement, as contained in the Durban Declaration of 1998, which underlined the need to adopt a collective position in accordance with the principles of international law as well as respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States. Moreover, it is the view of Indonesia that it is incumbent upon the Sixth Committee to conclude its discussion on a comprehensive convention on international terrorism on the basis of a draft submitted by India.

It is pertinent to recall that both the General Assembly and the Security Council adopted resolutions on 12 September 2001 that, among other actions, called on Member States to redouble their efforts to prevent and suppress terrorist acts, including by increasing cooperation and by bringing to justice the perpetrators, organizers and sponsors of the recent attacks. Furthermore, on 28 September 2001, the Security Council, in its resolution 1373 (2001), inter alia, called on all States to prevent and suppress the financing of terrorist acts by taking certain measures, including freezing without delay funds and other assets used to commit terrorism, calling on them as well to accede to relevant conventions, such as the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism.

My delegation would also like to recall that only last year the Millennium Declaration urged the Member States to take concrete action against international terrorism and to accede as soon as possible to all relevant conventions. Indonesia, for its part, is already in the process of ratifying relevant treaties. On 24 September 2001, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Indonesia signed the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism of 1999.

In conclusion, as we are painfully aware, terrorism has taken a deadly and unconscionable toll and threatens to undermine regional peace, global security and sustainable development. We are therefore duty-bound to eradicate this scourge once and forever. My delegation remains hopeful that, together with multilateral, regional and other cooperative efforts, including the participation of civil society, we will make significant contributions to rendering our world a safer and more secure place.

Mr. Wehbe (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): Mr. President, it is a pleasure for me to congratulate you on your election as President of the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly. I am convinced that your previous posts in your country and the respect you enjoy will facilitate your task of guiding the work of this session to the desired success.

My delegation also has the pleasure of associating itself with the statement made by the permanent representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya yesterday on behalf of the Arab group.

We meet here today at the United Nations, in New York City, a city in mourning, which, several days ago, suffered devastating terrorist attacks claiming thousands of innocent civilians.

The Syrian Arab Republic has vigorously condemned this odious crime committed against mankind. The President of the Syrian Arab Republic, Mr. Bashar Al-Assad, moreover, sent a letter of condolences to the President of the United States, George Bush, emphasizing his complete condemnation and firm denunciation of this series of terrorist attacks, which shocked the world by their barbarism, their contempt for human life and property, and their incompatibility with all religious, spiritual and human values. The attacks targeted innocent civilians and deprived them of their most fundamental right, the right to a peaceful and safe life. These attacks struck at the nerve centres of the United States and subjected them to massive destruction.

The President of my country asked President Bush and the entire world to lay down solid foundations for international cooperation with the objective of acting together to avoid a repetition of the events seen here and throughout the world. He asked him to work together in a spirit of genuine cooperation to eliminate terrorism wherever it may be and in all of its forms and manifestations.

International terrorism is nothing new. The attacks against New York, Washington, D.C. and Pennsylvania are not the first of their kind. But, they were genuinely devastating in their scope and impact, in both their human and material aspect. Their disastrous consequences, in fact, have awakened the international community to the need to put an end to this scourge.

For many years, my country, Syria, as well as numerous Arab and other countries, has been subjected to terrorism. We have called on the international community to condemn all forms of terrorism and, in particular, State terrorism.

Today, the entire truth needs to be told to this Assembly. Indeed, we cannot find a real remedy to the scourge of terrorism without revealing all the facts to the international community. We would like to emphasize here that international cooperation to combat terrorism has been insufficient. Many countries have not fulfilled their international legal obligations in combating terrorism. In this respect, the Syrian Arab Republic has played a leading role by proposing initiatives to fight terrorism. In fact, the late President Hafiz Al-Assad, in his concern to assure international cooperation, had as far back as 1986 proposed the holding of an international conference to define terrorism in order to distinguish it from the just and legitimate struggle of peoples fighting for independence and liberation. This is exactly what we are seeking today.

The General Assembly considered that proposal then. All the summits of the Non-Aligned Movement, the Organization of the Islamic Conference, and governmental and non-governmental bodies endorsed the initiative.

Unfortunately, we have let a golden opportunity slip by. Once and for all, we can now take advantage of this appeal in order to launch an unflagging war against terrorism, which has stricken New York, Washington and Pennsylvania, as well as cities in Africa, Europe and Latin America.

I would like to emphasize that the Arab countries have also made tireless efforts to combat the scourge of terrorism. Those efforts are reflected in the conclusion of a regional Arab Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism, the Convention of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) on Combating International Terrorism and all the continued appeals made by Arab leaders to fight this serious scourge.

Syria has always reaffirmed the need to act on all levels to combat international terrorism, in accordance with the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter. We have also called previously upon all States to adopt the national, regional and international legal measures required to combat and eliminate the scourge, and to implement the norms of international law and relevant international resolutions concerning the suppression of terrorist acts, their financing, their instigation, complicity in or tolerance of such acts and protection of the perpetrators. We also wish to emphasize that in 1952 Syria was among the first States to adopt strict measures within its own domestic legislation to combat terrorism. We have also signed numerous conventions with many States to combat transnational crime and to coordinate joint action in combating terrorism, illicit drug-trafficking and money-laundering.

Syria would like to reaffirm the right of the United States, within the framework of the United Nations, to pursue and bring to justice the perpetrators of these terrorist acts, and to do so through the various competent commissions and bodies, as well as to adopt carefully calculated measures to combat terrorism. However, any action to this end must be accompanied by irrefutable proof and in-depth, clear and thorough investigation. Such action should not be aimed at entire peoples.

Foreign occupation is indeed one of the most appalling forms of terrorism. Therefore, resistance to such occupation, including Israeli occupation, is legitimate — all the more so since in that occupation an attempt is being made to take advantage of the present situation and the present state of grief to crush the will of the Palestinian people to liberate themselves. The continuation of the occupation requires the international community to act immediately to put an end to it. This must be done in accordance with the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and international resolutions, and in compliance with the noble and moral religious values and principles that forbid the murder of civilians and innocent people in conformity with the principles of international law, which is based on the principle of cooperation among peoples for the establishment of just peace.

Syrian actions are based on the universal legacy of the Arab countries, of which we are one. This legacy rejects all forms of violence and terrorism. We advocate respect for the rights of all peoples, and we reaffirm the need not to link terrorism, Islam and Arabs. This would in no way contribute to the elimination of terrorism or to a strengthening of international cooperation aimed at achieving prosperity and progress for all humankind. Our joint efforts and our cooperation must aim at dialogue among civilizations in order to draw closer to each other, not a fight among civilizations that would serve no one's interests. Therefore, in order to put an end to terrorism, Syria is calling for genuine intensified international cooperation among civilizations within the framework of the United Nations. These necessary measures must be taken to eliminate the permanent danger of terrorism.

The Syrian Arab Republic has acceded to numerous regional and international conventions concerning the war on terrorism. At present, my country is considering and making efforts to ratify other relevant conventions through our available constitutional and legislative means. We believe that terrorism must be defined and that its root causes must be dealt with. It must not be dealt with as a transient phenomenon; the underlying causes must be dealt with. The international community is called upon to rejuvenate the peace process in the Middle East, a process that has been blocked by Israel because of the continuation of its occupation of the Arab territories, the settlements and its rejection of all relevant Security Council resolutions, aimed at establishing a just, comprehensive and lasting peace in the Middle East.

In his statement of 24 September 2001, the Secretary-General declared that the United Nations could play a fundamental role in the coordination of international efforts to combat terrorism. Syria would like to state that it supports the effective role that the United Nations could play, particularly as regards the mobilization and coordination of international efforts in this field and in efforts to draw up a definition of terrorism on which everyone could agree.

Mr. Farouk Al-Shara', the Syrian Minister for Foreign Affairs, emphasized that the events of 11 September were not ordinary ones. He expressed hope that that day might become a historic turning point in the history of nations, a turning point towards a better future. During his meeting with a delegation of the European troika in Damascus on 27 September, he added,

> "We have all been shocked; we have all given thought to this. We continue to give thought to this and to what the world will be like today and tomorrow".

He said that Syria, in fact, sympathized with those who had perished and extended its condolences to the families of the victims in the United States. He said,

> "Beyond the ruins, the ashes and the darkness, we can see the light, a light of the salvation of mankind throughout the world".

My delegation will cooperate with the Assembly to see that light and to ensure the success of your task. Indeed, international cooperation is imperative within the United Nations in order to combat terrorism and to define it.

Mr. Da Fonseca (Cape Verde): All the preceding delegations have tried to express from this rostrum their horror and condemnation in describing their feelings about the heinous acts committed against innocent and defenceless people, indeed against all of us, on the morning of 11 September.

Some must have faced the same difficulty as my delegation has in finding adequate words that can translate the revulsion and the pain we all experienced when it was clear that the tragedy resulted from carefully planned and coordinated actions aimed at coldly suppressing thousands of lives, allegedly to make a point.

Suddenly we discovered with horror that warped minds are able to plan and execute what we all thought unthinkable. It showed us how low some people can go or may be led to go in moral depravation.

After 11 September 2001 all of mankind has become endangered. All over the world everyone is now frightened of what may come next. For those of us who witnessed with disbelief the unfolding events, we know now that even worse tragedies may happen if we do not put a definite stop to terrorism. It is our duty to work so that they will never happen again.

The terrorist attacks on New York, Washington and Pennsylvania were evil acts indeed, criminal actions intended to carry an intimidating statement, but acts that proved self-defeating. They received clear and universal condemnation from every corner of the

world. No one has tried to justify what was done, let alone praise it. No one has even claimed to be responsible for organizing or planning, or even inspiring, the attacks. No organization has had the courage to admit that it did it.

This is a clear defeat for the perpetrators, and it is a sign of hope that the whole world has sent a spontaneous, united and strong message to those criminals that terrorism will not be tolerated.

The head of State and the Prime Minister of Cape Verde have expressed their deep condolences to the American Government and people and their heartfelt sympathy to the victims and their families. At the same time, they have condemned in the strongest terms the perpetration of these heinous crimes. Similar feelings were expressed by the leaders of all political parties. In many parts of the country ordinary citizens gathered or organized demonstrations to manifest their grief and denounce those barbaric acts. Two days of national mourning were declared.

In view of the events, the Cape Verdean authorities implemented immediate measures intended to raise the level of security, specifically in and around international airports. Numbers of police personnel were increased, and a new special detachment will be created to deal with airport security. Furthermore, the Government has declared its readiness to cooperate with the international efforts aimed at combating terrorism.

The Government is also studying closely resolution 1373 (2001) and is preparing to take the steps to implement it. We are party to some international conventions and protocols to combat terrorism and expect to sign the remainder in the near future and work for their early ratification.

There can be no doubt that the authors of and accomplices to these crimes must be brought to justice, and all States should cooperate to this end. However, caution should be used to ensure that no more innocent people are added to the already too-long list of victims of those crimes and that nothing serves as a further excuse for committing new acts of terror.

Many delegations have indicated that, besides prosecuting and punishing the perpetrators of terrorist acts, it is necessary to deprive them of their breeding grounds. A successful campaign to eradicate terrorism has to address the long-term challenges that were so eloquently enumerated in the Millennium Declaration. As long as political, economic and social injustice are allowed to prevail there will always be people trying to exploit them for their narrow political agendas or criminal purposes. As long as the international community lacks the capacity to put an end to conflicts and address their real causes, there will be no shortage of recruits for all sorts of desperate acts.

While adopting the necessary measures to eliminate the threat posed by the activities of terrorist groups, as well as their masterminds and supporters, it is important to ensure that the already scarce resources intended to promote the economic and social development of developing countries are not diverted. Instead, a stronger commitment should be made by the developed countries, particularly in the least developed countries, to help put an end to poverty, deprivation and marginalization.

This commitment should start now, by helping developing countries face the additional burden brought by their own effort to participate in the international campaign against international terrorism. By redirecting a share of already scarce resources to increase the level of security, their capacity for addressing the huge challenges of providing for the basic needs of their impoverished populations is reduced.

The scope of the terrorist attacks heightens the need for close cooperation among all States to eradicate this scourge of our times. The United Nations should play a decisive role in this cooperation by adopting effective measures and reinforcing the legal framework aimed at combating terrorism.

My delegation supports the calls made by previous speakers urging the early adoption of a comprehensive convention on terrorism. We are aware of some difficulties, notably the definition of what terrorism is. But the urgency brought on by the events of 11 September should direct us to find the necessary compromises that would enable the draft to be finished. As the Secretary General has stated, there is also a need for moral clarity, and,

> "There can be no acceptance of those who would seek to justify the deliberate taking of innocent civilian life, regardless of cause or grievance." (*A/56/PV.12*)

On the other hand, it is the opinion of my delegation that the Non-aligned Movement's proposal to convene under the auspices of the United Nations a high-level conference to unite the international efforts and adopt a coordinated response to suppress and eliminate terrorism is worthy of consideration by this Assembly. After 11 September 2001, no initiative aimed at formulating a joint approach and a common response to face the terrorist threats should be overlooked.

We are presented with an unprecedented opportunity to show unity and resolve in tackling one of the most pressing challenges ever faced by our family of nations. The United Nations has a unique opportunity to assert its leadership and make a significant step forward in the direction of the objectives set out in its Charter.

Mr. Kerim (the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia): Pleading for concerted action against international terrorism and for States' urgent accession to all relevant international conventions, the Millennium Summit of world leaders anticipated the need for a more effective and comprehensive approach with regard to joint efforts and overall cooperation within the United Nations system.

The proceedings of this General Assembly debate on agenda item 166 and the swift response by the United Nations in the aftermath of 11 September — the adoption of General Assembly resolution 56/1 and Security Council resolutions 1368 (2001) and 1373 (2001) — are a very convincing demonstration of the new spirit of cooperation in the United Nations, placing this anti-terrorism issue at the forefront of the Organization's agenda. This spirit is marked not only by the Security Council's strong support for the United Nations initiative of rapid and unanimous action, but also by the commitments of various Governments and States around the globe to join the anti-terrorist coalition.

Aligning itself with the ranks of this coalition, the Government of the Republic of Macedonia, at a meeting on 25 September, strongly condemned the terrorist attacks that took place on American soil, and decided to join the global coalition against terrorism. As far as the Macedonian contribution to the joint action in combating terrorism is concerned, my Government decided to prepare draft legislation on combating terrorism and to amend already existing legislation in this area, in order to comply with relevant regional and international conventions and other decisions of the United Nations, thus acting in compliance with the provisions of Security Council resolution 1373 (2001).

For its part, the Parliament of the Republic of Macedonia, in a declaration adopted on 11 September, expressed its strongest condemnation of the terrorist acts and conveyed its deepest condolences and sympathy to the families of the victims, citizens of the United States of America and other countries. Condemning international terrorism as the worst human evil of our time, the consequences of which were also deeply and tragically felt in the Republic of Macedonia, the Parliament expressed the readiness of the Republic of Macedonia to cooperate with and participate in the international activities against terrorism, including through its initiative to establish a regional anti-terrorist pact.

The tragic and outrageous events of 11 September on American soil left thousands of human victims and millions of tons of debris and rubble in their wake. A clear message reverberated through all of us: fighting terrorism on a global front is a clear-cut imperative of our time.

However, plunging into worldwide battle against terrorism means that we must at the same time recognize that — as Secretary-General Kofi Annan has rightfully underlined — no religion, people or region should be targeted because of the unspeakable acts of individuals.

From the point of view of the United Nations, the most important question now is how to deal with this global threat while strengthening the capacity within the Organization to carry out efforts aimed at international peace and security.

With regard to international terrorism, the existing body of United Nations conventions already provides for a solid international legal framework to implement many of the steps that must be taken to eradicate terrorism, including the extradition and prosecution of offenders and the suppression of money-laundering. Fully implementing those conventions will, however, require changes in national legal codes, such as those dealing with border controls and asylum policy.

In our view, the action to be taken should be two-fold. On one hand, all States that have not yet done so should be urged to accede and/or to speed up the process of ratification of existing United Nations conventions. On the other hand, the Sixth Committee will have the onerous task this year of intensifying its work and efforts and of building consensus for the draft conventions pertaining to international terrorism that are under consideration. That includes building consensus for a comprehensive convention on international terrorism and concluding negotiations on the draft convention for the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism. The assistance and guidance of the United Nations Legal Counsel will be more than welcome in this process. We also value the Declaration on Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism, which is contained in the annex to resolution 49/60, of 1994, as a good starting point upon which to build to that end.

The Republic of Macedonia strongly supports the unanimous adoption of Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) under Chapter VII of the Charter, and the setting up of a Security Council Committee to monitor implementation of the resolution by Member States. We believe that the bitter experience gained by South-Eastern Europe in recent years from the conflicts in the region — including the ongoing crisis in the Republic of Macedonia — should be taken into account while implementing resolution 1373 (2001). That experience clearly proved the inter-linkages that exist between terrorism, the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, organized crime, drug trafficking and money-laundering.

The Republic of Macedonia is party to all relevant United Nations conventions pertaining to terrorism. My country recently signed the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings and the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism. The process of ratifying those conventions is under way.

All nations are rightfully preoccupied with issues related to the aftermath of 11 September; but we must also remember the need to address the conditions that gave rise to the growth of such hatred and depravity. In other words, the United Nations must continue its work and concentrate its efforts towards fulfilling the obligations and commitments contained in the Millennium Declaration. That is exactly why the postponed general debate of the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly is now of paramount importance.

The conclusions to be drawn from the recent terrorist attacks on the United States must be clear. Globalization and interdependence are bringing enormous benefits to all of us, but they are also creating new strategic risks. Those risks include the vulnerability of globally integrated information and communication structures, the diffusion of potentially dangerous technologies, the combination of fundamentalism and political irresponsibility and access to weapons of mass destruction. These are global challenges and can therefore only be managed jointly, particularly in regard to fighting international terrorism. No State can guarantee security, peace and stability by itself. Cooperation and dialogue with partners must become a guiding principle of international security policy.

As the President of the Republic of Macedonia, Mr. Boris Trajkovski, pointed out in his statement of 14 September,

> "terrorism strikes the large and the small, the great and the humble ... and it is only by addressing the roots of terrorism that we can begin to eliminate it".

As a country with an association and stabilization agreement with the European Union, Macedonia fully shares the views expressed by the representative of the presidency of the European Union, the Permanent Representative of Belgium. We agree in particular with the statement that

> " ... strengthening international cooperation must go hand in hand with strengthening regional cooperation. It calls for strengthened regional cooperation in the fight against international terrorism, as a matter of urgency." (*A/56/PV.12*)

In that regard we welcome the adoption by the European Council of a common definition of terrorism, and we call for a similar approach within the United Nations system.

In concluding my statement, allow me to second the proposal made by the representative of Ukraine to declare 11 September the international day of the struggle against terrorism.

Mr. Schori (Sweden): Three weeks ago, within the span of a few hours we witnessed an unspeakable

tragedy and a most abominable terrorist attack. Our host country and its people, and the international community with them, were shocked and stunned by the viciousness of those acts, targeting as they did innocent civilians and extinguishing thousands of lives. I want today to convey Sweden's condolences and deep sympathy to the families and friends of the victims. I also want to express our sincere respect and admiration for the individual acts of bravery during and after the terrorist attack, and for the way in which New York and its people are recovering from this tragedy.

In addition to causing insufferable pain and damage on American soil and affecting citizens of nations worldwide, the attack of 11 September struck at core values endorsed by the international community and embodied by this Organization: democracy and tolerance, openness and cooperation. Our response in defence of these values must thus be unified and relentless. In his statement on 1 October, the Secretary-General noted that these vicious assaults had had the effect of reaffirming our common humanity. He also identified the task ahead: to develop a broad, comprehensive and, above all, sustained strategy to combat terrorism and eradicate it from our world. Sweden fully endorses the Secretary-General's call, and looks forward to working with all Member States of the United Nations to accomplish that task.

It is only through determined and united action that the international community can come to grips with the evil forces of terrorism. Terrorists aim at creating fear and uncertainty, and at provoking Governments and other decision-makers. Our response must be determined, carefully considered and well calibrated. We should answer with resolve and unity, and ensure that similar events are never repeated.

The quick and unequivocal response of the General Assembly and the Security Council on 12 September, as well as the unanimous adoption of Security Council resolution 1373 (2001), last Friday, clearly illustrate the vitality and relevance of the Organization in the fight against terrorism. In resolution 1368 (2001), the Security Council described the acts of 11 September as a threat to international peace and security, and reaffirmed the inherent right of individual or collective self-defence in accordance with the Charter. My Government recognizes that right to take measures of self-defence to prevent a similar atrocity, and notes that any response would have to seek to avoid civilian casualties. As stated by the Security Council, our common objective lies in bringing to justice the perpetrators, organizers and sponsors of these attacks, and in redoubling our efforts to prevent and suppress terrorist acts, including by increased cooperation.

Through its resolution 1373 (2001), the Security Council provided all Member States with a solid foundation for the struggle against terrorism. Sweden welcomes the resolve of the Security Council, affirming the central role of the United Nations in this endeavour. Resolution 1373 (2001) identifies a range of important measures to prevent and combat terrorism, including, among other things, stopping the flow of finance and funds for terrorist activities, improving information exchange, eliminating the supply of weapons to terrorists, bringing persons involved in terrorist acts to justice, preventing the movement of terrorists and denying them safe haven.

In his statement of 1 October, the Secretary-General observed that the implementation of resolution 1373 (2001) will require technical expertise at the national level, and he encouraged States to offer assistance in that regard. Sweden has taken note of his call, and will look into the possibility of providing such support as a means of strengthening the global struggle against terrorism.

The acts of 11 September — the worst mass killings of innocents in the sad history of terrorism — constitute not only a large-scale terrorist attack. My Government considers that those terrorist acts constitute a crime against humanity, and that States should bring the perpetrators to justice and punish them. In that regard, I want to stress the importance of the establishment of the International Criminal Court. The Rome Statute opens a new chapter in international law that will certainly affect the conduct of States but, more important, will guide and shape the behaviour of individuals.

I also want to stress the vital importance of the legal framework provided by the 12 conventions on international terrorism adopted under United Nations auspices, and their protocols. Those instruments should be signed, ratified and implemented worldwide without delay. The Swedish Government has recently ratified the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings, and will within days sign the International Convention for the Suppression of the

Financing of Terrorism and will ratify it as soon as the legal preparatory work is completed.

Efforts should also be redoubled to finalize negotiations on a comprehensive convention on international terrorism, as proposed by India, and to make progress in the deliberations on a convention for the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism, as proposed by the Russian Federation.

The tragedy of 11 September has highlighted the need for intensified efforts to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery vehicles. Sweden agrees with the statement by the Secretary-General a fortnight ago that progress in the area of nuclear non-proliferation is now more important than ever. Biological, chemical and nuclear weapons must not fall into the hands of terrorists. The international community must shoulder its responsibility and find ways to strengthen and ensure compliance with the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, ensure the effective implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction and reinforce the nuclear non-proliferation regime.

Greater efforts must also be made to prevent the uncontrolled spread of small arms and light weapons. In addition to fuelling armed conflicts, such weapons have been used in numerous terrorist acts. The Programme of Action adopted in July at the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects spells out a number of measures aimed at combating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. The events of 11 September have underlined the need for forceful follow-up to the Conference.

Let me end with this comment. There is a need to better address the underlying social, economic and political problems that create the human misery in which fanaticism and terrorism can grow and find support. Conflict prevention and resolution, as well as development cooperation and humanitarian assistance, trade and investment and increased efforts for cross-cultural understanding are indispensable instruments in a comprehensive long-term policy. In the coming year, two important meetings will take place at the highest political level: the International Conference on Financing for Development, to be held in Mexico, and the World Summit on Sustainable Development, to be held at Johannesburg. Let the events of recent weeks strengthen our resolve to reach substantial and concrete outcomes at those meetings, for the benefit of development worldwide.

Mr. Sharma (India): On Monday, a few hours before the General Assembly began its debate on terrorism here, in India a suicide bomber drove his car, packed with explosives, into the compound of the Legislative Assembly of Jammu and Kashmir, while two accomplices sprayed bullets at anyone in sight. Forty people are dead so far, among them schoolchildren and women, and many more are injured. A terrorist organization called Jaish-e-Mohammed has jubilantly claimed responsibility, naming the man who drove the car.

Jaish-e-Mohammed was set up by Masood Azhar, a foreign terrorist who was caught in India, tried and sentenced. Two years ago, an Indian Airlines plane was hijacked to Kandahar in Afghanistan by terrorists who demanded his release and that of a few other terrorists also in Indian jails. Using tactics that the world will now find familiar, they slit the throats of passengers and threatened to kill the others. Very reluctantly, to save innocent lives, we handed over the convicted terrorists to the Taliban in Kandahar; the hijackers and their prizes then disappeared into Taliban-held territory, from where they have since reappeared to kill, terrorize and incite to terrorism.

The terrible events of 11 September brought home to a world that probably did not realize this until then how much of an international phenomenon terrorism truly is: international in its organization and international in its effects. We should remember that as we take up the agenda item entitled "Measures to eliminate international terrorism". We understand from reports in the Western media that at least one of the terrorists we were forced to free in Kandahar is under suspicion for the attacks on the World Trade Center. The prime suspect, Osama bin Laden, based in Afghanistan, recruited his terrorists from West Asia and North Africa, sent some of them to Europe to plan and prepare, and carried out an act of monumental cruelty in North America. While the target was the United States — and its citizens bore the brunt — individuals from all parts of the world were among the victims: 250 Indian citizens are still missing. Over the past decade, terrorists have killed tens of thousands in

almost daily attacks in India, but very few incidents have taken as heavy a toll of Indian lives as this did.

The fact that terrorism is an international problem and can only be tackled collectively is something that countries that have suffered most from it know in their bones and that they have urged upon the rest of the world. The welcome transformation that has come about since 11 September is the sudden emergence of an international solidarity to meet an international threat. The United States, far and away the most powerful State in the international community, nevertheless believes that it needs and must have the assistance of a coalition of States in order to successfully mount an offensive against the terrorists who attacked it.

If the United States needs this, how much more do others, infinitely more weak and vulnerable, need the same solidarity? Without it, countries that have been preyed upon by a global network of terrorism simply cannot cope with the challenge alone.

We therefore hope that the solidarity which has been manifest over the last two weeks will continue and that it will not be confined to a hunt for an individual or a group, or to dealing with the symptoms alone; we must destroy terrorism as a system. Terrorism is an organic whole; it would be dangerous to try to cut one of the cells out, and to then tell ourselves that we had killed it off. It is an evil that metastasizes. Terrorism must be destroyed root and branch. It is the anathema of the new century.

We know that there can be a concern that a war against terrorism might turn into a witch-hunt. Some argue that a distinction must be drawn between freedom fighters and terrorists. To this, we would say, as the Secretary-General reminded us on Monday, that the laws of civilized behaviour should apply to all. Normatively, international humanitarian law does not permit methods or means that can only be described as terrorism in the pursuit of any cause.

The great leap forward in international law over the last few years has been the emergence of the norm that there can be no impunity for crimes that constitute a grave violation of human rights. When political office, and bureaucratic or diplomatic immunity, have not protected some who have committed grave violations and have now been brought to justice, it cannot be admissible to argue that freedom fighters or any other group would be the only individuals who would be above the law. Terrorism is defined by the act, not by a description of the perpetrator.

Secondly, while the cynical view might be that the end justifies the means, in all worthwhile political enterprises, the means are as important as the ends. Eighty years ago, as India's freedom struggle was moving into a decisive phase, police fired on a group of protesters in the village of Chauri Chaura. The demonstrators ran amok and burnt down the police station, with 22 policemen in it. Mahatma Gandhi declared that the freedom movement had disgraced itself, and suspended it.

What sort of freedom would it be that may be claimed by massacring 6,000 innocent people on 11 September? The same day, thousands of miles away in India, terrorists walked into a temple, seized the two priests and beheaded them before the congregation. Those terrorists came from the same stable as those who slit the throats of passengers on 11 September, who killed Indian passengers in the same brutal fashion two years ago, and who attacked the Legislative Assembly in Jammu and Kashmir on Monday. They were trained in the same camps and were financed and backed by the same people. In facing them, as many have reminded us, there can be no moral relativism. The Secretary-General emphasized the imperative of moral clarity. One can either be for civilization or for terrorism; there is no middle ground.

We hope that the shock of what happened on 11 September will force many Governments to rethink positions to which they have been wedded for far too long. Some of them, which are liberal, open societies, but which have not so far been the target of terrorists, have argued that only States violate human rights; terrorism, they think, is only a crime, and they have been reluctant to join in either a condemnation of, or action against, terrorism as a violation of human rights.

Speaking to the Commission on Human Rights on 25 September, the High Commissioner for Human Rights reminded its members that the victims of the attacks of 11 September have lost the foremost right, the right to life. We could not agree more. Terrorists violate human rights in the most egregious ways, and, as the High Commissioner told the Commission, the acts of terrorism that took place on 11 September should be considered a crime against humanity.

But there is an even more insidious way in which terrorists undermine human rights. As the events of 11

September showed, terrorists are driven not so much by blind rage as by a clear-eyed hatred of the values that open, liberal, secular societies represent. There is an inevitable progression in plural, democratic societies to ever-greater freedoms for their citizens, balanced by civic responsibilities freely undertaken. The citizens of the freest societies in the world enjoy freedoms now that their parents did not have.

It is this progress towards ever-greater freedom that represents the greatest threat to those who believe in violent, repressive creeds. Multi-ethnic, multireligious, open and tolerant societies are naturally odious to them; it is these values that they want to destroy most of all, even more than symbols like the World Trade Center, or a Legislative Assembly. For them, terrorism is a double-barrelled weapon. After the devastation it wreaks, it takes an even greater and more insidious toll. Open, democratic societies, by their very nature both the targets of and vulnerable to terrorism, must necessarily take steps to defend their citizens. Instead of moving towards greater civil liberties, they have to constrict some in the interests of security.

In the most unfortunate situations, the State apparatus, unable to cope with the security challenge posed by terrorism, is forced to take draconian measures to counter it, with an inevitable impact on civic and human rights. The anguished debate over this that we see taking place in the United States is one that many other democracies wracked by terrorism have gone through many times over. Terrorism wants to force a diminution of openness, tolerance, rights and freedom. This is why it is, and must be seen as, a principal threat to human rights.

We hope that the international solidarity forged in the crucible of the recent disaster will be permanent, but it would be prudent to work on the assumption that, as memory fades, so too might the willingness to stay together to fight a common evil. Security Council resolution 1373 (2001), the far-reaching resolution that the Security Council has just adopted, should provide a framework for collective and individual action, laying down a permanent obligation on all Members. We see it as analogous to the special powers that democratic Governments enact to counter terrorism. We hope that it will be followed up and effectively implemented.

The attack on the Legislative Assembly, which took place two days after resolution 1373 (2001) was adopted and is a deliberate challenge to it, will be the first test of the willingness of States to abide by the responsibilities that the Council has now made mandatory and of the resolve of the Council and the international community to back up their words with deeds, because paragraph 2 (d) of resolution 1373 (2001) demands that States

> "prevent those who finance, plan, facilitate or commit terrorist acts from using their respective territories for those purposes against other States or their citizens".

The General Assembly must do at least as much. It does not have the power to compel compliance, but it speaks with the voice and the moral authority of the entire international community. The General Assembly cannot, and perhaps should not, try to match the resolution of the Council, but it can, and we hope it will, decide to throw its whole weight behind measures to develop a framework of international law within which international action can be taken against terrorism.

The capstone on this structure of conventions against terrorism is the comprehensive convention now under negotiation. The question has sometimes been asked as to why, when we already have 12 international conventions against terrorism, we need a comprehensive convention. The answer was given, sadly and monstrously, on 11 September. Planes were hijacked, but the cluster of conventions on hijacking provides for action only against the hijackers; on 11 September, they killed themselves with their victims. Passengers were taken hostage, but the cluster of conventions against hostage-taking also provides for action only against the hostage-takers; on 11 September, they killed themselves with their victims. Planes were used as massive bombs to destroy the World Trade Center and damage the Pentagon, but the conventions on terrorist bombings have precise definitions of what constitutes an explosive; no one thought that a plane would ever be used as an explosive.

Therefore, as experts on international law now realize and our citizens will find hard to believe, under the framework of the existing conventions on terrorism the international community could not take action against those who recruited, trained, ordered, supported, instigated or harboured the terrorists who committed the most horrendous act of terrorism the world has ever seen.

The Working Group of the Sixth Committee goes into session in a fortnight's time. There are a few issues left to resolve. As the Secretary-General reminded us, some of these have been contentious in the past, when we might have permitted ourselves the luxury of theoretical debate. It would be the best memorial to those who died on 11 September and the clearest pledge that we will work to ensure that an atrocity like that never recurs if, at this session, the General Assembly were to come to an agreement by consensus on a comprehensive convention to outlaw international terrorism.

Mr. Wang Yingfan (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation was deeply shocked by and strongly condemns the 11 September terrorist attacks in New York, Washington, D.C., and Pennsylvania. The item on measures to eliminate international terrorism has been deliberated by the General Assembly for quite some years, but this year it has become more special and urgent than ever before.

Terrorism, which endangers innocent lives, depletes social wealth and jeopardizes state security, constitutes a serious challenge to human civilization and dignity and poses a real threat to international peace and security. The international community must therefore pool its wisdom and strengthen international cooperation against terrorism.

The United Nations, which is the principal forum in which States can cooperate with each other in combating terrorism, should play a leading role in the international effort to that end. The main organs and other relevant agencies of the United Nations should step up their coordination and cooperation in preventing and combating international terrorism. The Security Council should play its due role and establish an international anti-terrorism mechanism.

Since the General Assembly's adoption in 1994 of the Declaration on Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism, commendable progress has been made in strengthening measures to combat international terrorism, as represented by the adoption of the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings and the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, as well as the ongoing formulation of an international convention for the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism and a comprehensive convention on international terrorism. States should be encouraged to become parties to the existing international anti-terrorism conventions as soon as possible and to implement them faithfully. More positive and constructive efforts should be made to finalize the aforementioned two draft anti-terrorism conventions that are still under negotiation.

States should take the necessary measures, in accordance with their national laws and international obligations, to cut off any financial, material, military and other forms of support for terrorists, resolutely bring the perpetrators of terrorist acts to justice and refrain from supporting or tolerating them for any reason or in any manner. Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) of 28 September 2001 should be faithfully implemented.

The fight against international terrorism, which will be a protracted and complicated task, should be guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and other well-established norms of international law. An integrated approach involving political, diplomatic, economic, legal and other means should be adopted in this regard.

We are strongly opposed to linking terrorism to any specific religion or ethnicity. In order to eliminate international terrorism, efforts must be made to address its symptoms and underlying causes alike. In the international fight against terrorism, the diversity of civilizations should be respected and the issue of development addressed vigorously so as to enable people at all levels in all countries to benefit from globalization. The international community should strengthen its efforts to solve regional conflicts in a more positive manner and seek just and reasonable solutions on the basis of the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter.

The Government of China firmly opposes and condemns terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. It is China's basic policy to prevent and combat all terrorist activities. China is a party to nine out of the 12 international conventions against terrorism and active preparations are under way for it to join the two most recently adopted: the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings and the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism.

The Chinese Government has dedicated itself to the promotion of regional and bilateral cooperation against terrorism, and has, within the framework of the

Shanghai Cooperation Organization, concluded, with Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, the Shanghai Convention on Combating Terrorism, Separatism and Extremism.

The Chinese Government is determined to fight resolutely, together with all other States, against terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

Programme and organization of work

The President: I wish to draw the attention of the General Assembly to document A/INF/56/3, which contains a partial programme of work and schedule of plenary meetings and which has been distributed in the Hall. This schedule was prepared to facilitate the organization of the work of delegations and to help ensure that the relevant documentation is ready for the discussion on the respective items.

Members will notice that agenda item 11, "Report of the Security Council", originally announced for Thursday morning, 4 October 2001, has been scheduled for Monday, 15 October 2001 instead. Members will also notice that, as a result of consultations, it was agreed that the general debate be scheduled for a seven-day period, from Saturday, 10 November, through Friday, 16 November 2001, which means that it will include one Sunday, 11 November. Since the Assembly will devote seven days instead of 10 days to the general debate, the morning meetings during the general debate will be from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and the afternoon meetings will be from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Furthermore, since this will result in 48 hours for statements in the general debate, instead of 60 hours, I urge speakers to limit their statements in the general debate to 15 minutes, so that all the speakers can be accommodated within these seven days. I honestly ask for your cooperation in this regard so that we can hold the general debate as scheduled.

I will in due course announce the dates for the consideration of other agenda items, as well as keep the Assembly informed of any additions or changes. This information will also be indicated in addenda to document A/INF/56/3. The lists of speakers for items cited in document A/INF/56/3 are now open.

In addition, I would like to announce the following activities. The 2001 United Nations Pledging Conference for Development Activities will be held on the morning of Wednesday and Thursday, 7 and 8 November. The announcement of voluntary contributions to the 2001 programmes of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East will take place on Thursday, 4 December, in the morning. Members are requested to consult the Journal for the announcements on these activities for further details.

For more detailed information on the general debate, I now give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Perfiliev (Director, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council Affairs Division): We would like to inform Member States that the list of speakers for the general debate will be prepared in accordance with provisional list, number 3, that was made available to all members on 29 August 2001. The sequence of speakers on the list will be maintained as much as possible, but the list will be condensed to cope with the new time frame of the debate, which allows 14 meetings instead of previously planned 20 meetings. Now we have 14 meetings instead of 20, and seven days instead of 10 days of debate.

However, those Member States that had indicated previously to the Secretariat that their heads of State and Government would be coming to the general debate should reconfirm the level of their representation for the general debate to the General Assembly and Economic and Social Council Affairs Division by Monday, 8 October 2001, at 5 p.m. Our fax number is 963-4230.

We will also be happy to be informed as soon as possible if other Member States will participate at the head of State or head of Government level, so as to accommodate them in the best way possible. This would enable the Secretariat to prepare a new provisional list of speakers, number 4, for the general debate during that week and make it available to members by the end of next week. This announcement will be distributed in the Hall during this meeting or in the afternoon today.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.